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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LISBON 679

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJ: PORTUGAL'S PARTIES FACE THE FUTURE: THE COMMUNIST
PARTY

REF: (A) LISBON 143 (DTG 090645Z JAN 76), (B) LISBON 261

(DTG 141017Z JAN 76), (C) LISBON 644 (DTG 300715Z
JAN 75)

SUMMARY: THE NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT COST THE COMMUNIST PARTY SOME
OF ITS PRIMARY ASSETS, MOST NOTABLY ITS SUPPORT IN THE ARMED
FORCES. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THESE LOSSES HAVE
SHAKEN ALVARO CUNHAL'S GRIP ON THE PARTY, THEY HAVE PRODUCED
TACTICAL SHIFTS IN POLICY. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE SKETCHED A
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TWO-TRACK STRATEGY FOR THE NEAR FUTURE WHICH, ALTHOUGH
PRIMARILY DEFENSIVE, ALLOWS ROOM FOR OCCASIONAL SALLIES AGAINST

SUCH TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY AS THE GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY PROGRAM. THE PCP WILL ATTEMPT TO PROTECT ITS REMAINING POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND WILL SEEK TO PRESERVE ITS PEASANT AND WORKER SUPPORT BY OPPOSING ANY ROLLBACK OF THE AGRARIAN REFORM AND NATIONALIZATION PROGRAMS. THE COMMUNISTS, MEANWHILE, WILL BE FORCED TO REORGANIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE PARTY INTERNALLY IN PREPARATION FOR THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. BACKGROUND: (A) FOLLIOWING THE APRIL 25, 1974 COUP, THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF ITS REPUTATION AS A LEADING OPPONENT OF THE SALAZAR-CAETANO REGIME. AGGRESSIVE AND OPPORTUNISTIC, THE PARTY SUCCEEDED IN ATTAINING INFLUENCE IN SUCH KEY POWER CENTERS AS THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM), THE GOVERNMENT AND BUREAUCRACY, THE MEDIA, AND ORGANIZED LABOR.

(B) THE APRIL 1975 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WERE A SETBACK FOR THE PCP. IT OBTAINED ONLY 12.5 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, LESS THAN IT HAD EXPECTED. THE MYTH OF WIDESPREAD PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE PCP WAS SHATTERED. DURING THE SUMMER OF 1975, AN INCREASINGLY EFFECTIVE ANTI-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION DEVELOPED, COMPRISING THE SOCIALISTS (PS), THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS (PPD), THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER PARTY (CDS), AND NON-COMMUNIST MILITARY. THIS DEVELOPMENT PARALLELED THE RELEASE OF PENT-UP ANTI-COMMUNIST SENTIMENTS AMONG THE PORTUGUESE POPULATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTH, WHERE PCP OFFICES WERE ATTACKED WITH SUCH FORCE AND CONSISTENCY THAT BY FALL COMMUNIST INFLUENCE NORTH OF LISBON HAD BEEN LARGELY ELIMINATED, EXCEPT FOR SUCH URBAN CENTERS AS OPORTO. BY SEPT 1975, THE PCP'S OPPONENTS HAD SUCCEEDED IN TOPPLING COMMUNIST-LINING PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES AND IN FORMING THE SOCIALIST-DOMINATED GOVERNMENT OF ADM JOSE PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO.

(C) A PERIOD OF ACUTE CONFLICT ENSUED. THE GOVERNMENT AND NON-COMMUNIST MILITARY, SUPPORTED BY THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES, SOUGHT TO REDUCE FURTHER PCP INFLUENCE IN THE BUREAUCRACY AND MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE. THE COMMUNISTS RESPONDED WITH AN ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO TOPPLE THE GOVERNMENT OR, AT A MINIMUM, SO PARALYZE IT THAT IT WOULD BE UNABLE TO CONDUCT FURTHER "PURGES OF THE LEFT." UNCOMFORTABLY ALLIED WITH THE FAR LEFT UNDER A "POPULAR POWER" BANNER OF CONVENIENCE, THE
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COMMUNISTS BROUGHT THEIR WORKING CLASS SUPPORTERS INTO THE STREETS ALONG WITH RADICAL SOLDIERS. THIS ANTI-GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN WAS PUMPED UP BY THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED PRESS AND SUPPORTED BY COMMUNIST DEPUTIES IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. BY NOVEMBER 25, THE COMMUNISTS HAD SUCCEEDED IN PRODUCING A HIGHLY UNSTABLE POLITICAL CLIMATE.

(D) ROLE IN ABORTIVE COUP: THE PCP'S NATIONAL LEADERSHIP HAS CATEGORICALLY DENIED CHARGES OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT. CONCRETE EVIDENCE TYING THE LEADERSHIP DIRECTLY TO THE COUP IS

SCANTY. AS THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON INQUIRY INTO THE COUP SOUGHT TO MAKE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL TENSION PRODUCED BY THE PCP'S PRE-NOV 25 ACTIVITIES WAS DECISIVE IN PRECIPITATING THE CLIMATE THAT LED TO THE PARATROOP REVOLT. ADDITIONALLY, THE PARTY HAS ADMITTED THAT LOCAL PCP CELLS AND ORGANIZATIONS UNDER ITS CONTROL OPENLY SUPPORTED REBEL FORCES DURING THE ABORTIVE COUP.

2. NOV 25 COUP -- WHAT IT MEANT TO THE PARTY AND WHY:

(A) THE ABORTIVE COUP WAS A MAJOR SETBACK FOR THE PCP. LEFTIST UNITS IN THE LISBON AREA ON WHICH THE PCP RELIED TO BACK UP ITS POSITIONS WERE DISBANDED. ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS SUV, THROUGH WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HAD DISRUPTED THE ARMED FORCES OUTSIDE LISBON, DISAPPEARED. SYMPATHETIC OR MALLEABLE MILITARY LEADERS WERE ARRESTED, FLED THE COUNTRY, OR STEPPED DOWN BECAUSE OF THEIR ROLE IN THE COUP. PRO-COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION ON THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL WAS REDUCED TO NAVY CDR MARTINS GUERREIRO. IN ADDITION TO THEIR LOSSES IN THE MILITARY SECTOR, THE COMMUNISTS SAW THEIR FIRM HOLD ON THE MEDIA BROKEN AND THEIR CONTROL OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES EXPOSED TO INCREASING CHALLENGE BY THEIR POLITICAL RIVALS.

(B) THE PCP FOUND ITS MEANS FOR INFLUENCING POLITICAL EVENTS REDUCED TO THE FOLLOWING MAJOR ASSETS:

-- ITS CONTINUED REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT AND REMAINING STRONGHOLDS IN THE BUREAUCRACY;

-- ITS DISCIPLINE, FINANCING, AND LINKS TO THE SOVIET UNION;

-- ITS TRADITIONAL WORKING CLASS SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY IN THE
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LISBON AREA;

-- ITS SUPPORT AMONG RURAL WORKERS IN CENTRAL
AND SOUTHER PORTUGAL.

3. LEADERSHIP AND POLICY CHANGES: (A) LEADERSHIP: EVEN PRIOR TO THE NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT, THERE HAD BEEN PERSISTENT REPORTS OF DISSATISFACTION WITHIN THE PCP LEADERSHIP AND RANK AND FILE OVER THE HARD-LINE POLICIES OF SEC GEN ALVARO CUNHAL. PCP NUMBER-TWO OCTAVIO PATO AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER CARLOS ALBOIM INGLES WERE MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS EXPONENTS OF A "BERLINGUER LINE" WITHIN THE PARTY. CUNHAL'S

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POSITION WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE THE BACKING OF THE PRE-APRIL 25 PCP HARD CORE, LED BY JAIME SERRA, THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE PARTY'S POLITICAL COMMISSION. THE NOV 25 DENOUEMENT, WHICH CUNHAL'S AGRESSIVE POLICIES DID SO MUCH TO FOSTER, HAS NATURALLY INCREASED SPECIULATION THAT HE WOULD BE PUSHED ASIDE. EVIDENCE ON THIS QUESTION, HOEVER, IS NOT CONCLUSIVE.

(B) A RECENT MAJOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT CITED THE NEED FOR "IMPROVING THE COLLECTIVE WORK" OF THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP AND MAY INDIRECTLY HERALD CUNHAL'S REMOVAL. THE ARTICULATE AND SELF-CONTROLLED PATO, WHOSE REVOLUTIONARY CREDENTIALS ARE AS RESPECTABLE AS CUNHAL'S, WOULD MAKE A CREDIBLE ALTERNATIVE. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS THAT, WHILE SOVIET ENTHUSIASM FOR THE AGGRESSIVE CUNHAL HAS ALLEGEDLY COOLED, PATO
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AND INGLES'S "LOW RISK" STOCK HAS RISEN. THE "MODERATE"

POSITION, FURTHERMORE, IS BELIEVED TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT AMONG THE PCP'S YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND AMONG MANY RANK-AND-FILE MEMBERS WHO JOINED THE PARTY AFTER THE APRIL 1974 COUP. SUCH GRASS-ROOTS SUPPORT COULD BE IMPORTANT. PRIOR TO THE COUP THE PCP HAD AN ESTIMATED 5,000 MEMBERS; IT NOW CLAIMS OVER 100,000.

(C) ON THE OTHER HAND, KEY POSITIONS IN THE PARTY'S NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS REMAIN FIRMLY IN THE HANDS OF THE PRE-APRIL PARTY LEADERSHIP WHICH ROSE TO PROMINENCE UNDER CUNHAL. THERE IS LITTLE HARD EVIDENCE THAT SUCH KEY FIGURES AS PCP SECRETARIAT MEMBERS JOAQUIM GOMES AND SERGIO VILLARIQUES OR POLITICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS CARLOS BRITO AND ANTONIO DIAS LOURENCO DISAGREE WITH CUNHAL. EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS SUCH AS SOCIALIST LEADER MRAIO SOARES, WHO HAS KNOWN CUNHAL SINCE YOUTH, BELIEVE THAT CUNHAL'S LEADERSHIP HAS GONE UNCHALLENGED FOR THIRTEEN YEARS MAINLY BECAUSE HE HAS CAREFULLY PREVENTED THE RISE OF POTENTIAL RIVALS, PROMOTING ONLY "MEDIOCRITIES" LOYAL TO HIMSELF. NO CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP IN ANY CASE IS LIKELY BEFORE THE NEXT PCP NATIONAL CONGRESS, STILL SCHEDULED "IN PRINCIPLE" FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR.

(D) POLICY -- TWO TRACKS FOR THE FUTURE; WHATEVER THE EVENTUAL FATE OF CUNHAL, THE TELLING LOSSES SUFFERED BY THE PCP AS A RESULT OF THE ABORTIVE NOV 25 COUP HAVE PRODUCED MAJOR REEVALUATIONS AND ALTERATIONS IN POLICY. POST-COUP PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY CUNHAL AND THE PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE PARTY CONTEMPLATES A TWO-TRACK STRATEGY FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE WHICH, WHILE IT ALLOWS FOR OCCASIONAL SALLIES AGAINST TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY, IS ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE.

(E) ON THE DEFENSIVE SIDE, THE COMMUNISTS WILL FIGHT HARD TO PROTECT THEIR REMAINING POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND BUREAUCRACY, FROM WHICH THEY CONTINUE TO DERIVE CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE, PRESTIGE, AND A VALUABLE VANTAGE POINT FOR MONITORING AND DISRUPTING THE ACTIVITIES OF THEIR ADVERSARIES. THE PCP HAS DROPPED ENTIRELY ITS PRE-NOV 25 DEMANDS THAT THE PPD BE EXPELLED FROM THE GOVERNMENT AS A CONDITION FOR CONTINUED COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION. AT THE SAME TIME, IT HAS ATTEMPTED
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TO MEND ITS FENCES WITH THE SOCIALISTS, WHOSE SUPPORT IT WILL NEED TO REMAIN IN THE GOVERNMENT, BY DUSTING OFF THE "UNITED FRONT" CONCEPT. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TONED DOWN THEIR ATTACKS ON PS LEADERSHIP WHILE COURTING THE SOCIALIST RANK-AND-FILE BY PLAYING UP THE DANGER OF A RESURGENT RIGHT. TO PROTECT ITS WORKING CLASS SUPPORT IN THE SOUTH AND IN URBAN INDUSTRIAL AREAS, MEANWHILE, THE PCP WILL OPPOSE ANY ATTEMPTS TO DILUTE OR REVERSE THE AGRARIAN REFORM AND NATIONALIZATION PROGRAMS, BOTH OF WHICH THEY USED TO EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE. THE PCP'S

RECENT ACCEPTANCE OF A COMPROMISE LIMITING AGRARIAN REFORM TO SOUTH OF THE TAGUS RIVER, HOWEVER, INDICATES THE COMMUNISTS RECOGNIZE THEY CAN EXPECT LITTLE EXPANSION OF THAT PROGRAM.

(F) OFFENSIVE THRUSTS AGAINST CHOSEN TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY, HOWEVER, WILL NOT BE PASSED UP. DISASSOCIATING THEMSELVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM, THE PCP WILL SEEK TO EXPLOIT PUBLIC DISSATISFACTION WITH AUSTERITY MEASURES. THE COMMUNISTS WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO LEAD A PUBLIC OUTCRY AGAINST THE CONTINUED IMPRISONMENT OF THE NOV 25 DE-TAINEES, WHILE SEEKING TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT BY DRAWING ATTENTION TO ITS RELEASE OF MEMBERS OF THE FORMER SECRET POLICE AND PROMINENT FIGURES OF THE FORMER REGIME.

(G) FAR-LEFT RELATIONS: PCP RELATIONS WITH THE FAR LEFT WERE A MAJOR CASUALTY OF THE ABORTIVE COUP. NEVER HARMONIOUS THEY ARE CURRENTLY AT AN ALLTIME LOW. THE PCP HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO DISASSOCIATE ITSELF FROM ITS ERSTWHILE TACTICAL ALLIES, BLAMING THEIR "ADVENTURISM" AND RIGIDITY FOR THE REBELLION AND ITS DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES. ON THE OTHER SIDE, THE FAR-LEFT PARTIES CHARGE THE PCP WITH TOUCHING OFF THE COUP AND THEN WITHDRAWING ITS SUPPORT SO AS TO ELIMINATE THEM. FUTURE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE RULED OUT. THE PCP HAS EXPRESSED ITS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE ULTRAS PROVIDED THEY CAN SHED THEIR "DIVISIONIST" ATTITUDES (I.E. EXCEPT PCP TUTELAGE). DESPITE THEIR HARSH DENUNCIATIONS OF THE PCP SINCE THE COUP, MOREOVER, GROUPS SUCH AS THE PRP, THE MES AND THE LCI HAVE GRUDGINGLY PARTICIPATED IN COMMUNIST-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES, NOTABLY THE JAN 17 DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY PROGRAM.

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4. THE PARTY AND THE MILITARY:

(A) OF THE MAJOR PARTIES, THE PCP HAD MOST EFFECTIVELY RECOGNIZED THE FULCRAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MILITARY TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS. ITS ASSIDUOUS COURTING OF THE AFM EARNED IT MANY CONVERTS AND SYMPATHIZERS IN THE MILITARY AND WAS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PCP'S EARLY SUCCESSES OVER ITS RIVALS. THE NOV 25 COUP EFFECTIVELY UNDERCUT COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN THE ARMED FORCES AND THE PCP FEARS THAT FUTURE STRENGTHENING OF RIGHT IN THE MILITARY WILL PERMANENTLY DEPRIVE IT OF VOICE IN THAT FORUM. WITH THEIR FORMER MILITARY ALLIES IN JAIL OR OTHERWISE OUT OF THE PICTURE, THE PCP HAS A REBUILDING JOB ON ITS HANDS. THE REBUILDING WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT UNLESS THE PARTY RADICALLY ALTERS ITS AGGRESSIVE TACTICS OF THE PAST.

(B) THE AFM: ALTHOUGH THE PCP CONTINUES TO NURTURE

HOPES THAT THE AFM WILL ONE DAY REGAIN ITS FORMER UNITY AND
ROLE, IT HAS RECOGNIZED THAT THE PRESENT AFM IS A DIFFERENT
MOVEMENT FROM THAT EXISTING PRIOR TO NOV 25. THE PCP NONETHE-
LESS HOLDS THE AFM INDISPENSABLE TO THE "REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS."
SINCE THE MOVEMENT IS A POTENTIAL TRANSMISSION BELT INTO THE
ARMED FORCES AND HAS A FUNDAMENTALLY LEFTIST OUTLOOK.

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(C) THE PACT: ALONG WITH THE FELLOW-TRAVELING PORTUGUESE
DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP) THE PCP RAISED THE ONLY DISSONANT
VOICE AMIDST IMMEDIATE POST-NOV 25 CLAMORING BY MAJOR POLITICAL
PARTIES FOR REVISION OF THE APRIL 11 AFM-PARTIES CONSTITUTIONAL
PACT. THE PCP CONTINUES TO HOLD THAT SOME KIND OF PACT IS
NECESSARY TO GUARANTEE THAT PORTUGAL STAYS ON THE REVOLUTIONARY
PATH. IT HAS RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT POLITICAL REALITY --
PARTICULARLY THE LOSS OF PCP INFLUENCE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY

COUNCIL -- HAS NECESSITATED REVISION OF THE PACT.

5. THE PARTY AND THE ECONOMY: THE PCP'S CURRENT TWO-TRACK POLITICAL STRATEGY HAS ENTAILED CHANGES OF EMPHASIS IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE. HERE AGAIN THE KEYNOTE IS DEFENSE, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON PRESERVING THE "CONQUESTS" OF THE AGRARIAN REFORM
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AND NATIONALIZATION. AGRARIAN REFORM HAS BECOME AN ESPECIALLY SENSITIVE ISSUE IN THE WAKE OF RECENT DEMANDS BY INDEPENDENT FARMERS THAT IT BE ROLLED BACK. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ADMITTED THAT SOME EXCESSES WERE COMMITTED IN APPLYING THE PROGRAM AND HAVE ENDORSED SOME REDRESS. THEY HAVE, HOWEVER, ADAMANTLY REFUSED TO BACK DOWN ON THEIR INSISTENCE THAT THE PROGRAM'S ESSENTIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS NOT BE REVERSED. ON THE OFFENSIVE TRACK, MEANWHILE, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE SUPPORTED THEIR SALLIES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S AUSTERITY PROGRAM BY OSTENTATIOUSLY DEMANDING THAT THE UPPER CLASSES BE MADE TO BEAR THE BURDEN FOR THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS, FOR WHICH THE PCP REJECTS RESPONSIBILITY.

6. FUTURE PROSPECTS: (A) THE MAIN COMMUNIST CONCERN IN THE MONTHS AHEAD WILL BE TO PRESERVE THEIR POSITIONS. ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF ITS IMPLICATION IN THE EVENTS OF NOV 25, THIS MAY PROVE DIFFICULT. THE CDS HAS ALREADY RHETORICALLY QUESTIONED WHETHER THE PCP SHOULD BE "REWARDED" FOR ITS ROLE IN THE COUP BY CONTINUED REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT; THE PPD IS NOT CURRENTLY DEMANDING PCP EXPULSION, BUT HAS IN THE PAST AND WILL DO SO AGAIN IF IT PERCEIVES SUCH A POLICY TO BE IN ITS INTERESTS. CONTINUED PCP PARTICIPATION THEREFORE VERY MUCH DEPENDS ON THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE, MAKING IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE PCP TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH THEM. FOR THE MOMENT, THE PCP POSITION APPEARS REASONABLY SECURE, BUT IT WOULD NOT TAKE MUCH, ESPECIALLY WITH UPCOMING ELECTIONS, TO MAKE THEIR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT A MAJOR ISSUE.

(B) INTERNAL REFORMS: A SECOND PRESSING NEED IS FOR THE PARTY TO STRENGTHEN ITS INTERNAL DISCIPLINE AND ORGANIZATION, WHICH, BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S OWN RECENT ADMISSION, WERE STRETCHED THIN BY AN INFLUX OF NEW MEMBERS DURING THE HALCYON DAYS OF 1974-75. MANY NEW MEMBERS WERE ORIGINALLY ATTRACTED TO THE PCP BECAUSE IT LOOKED -- AND CERTAINLY ACTED -- LIKE A WINNER. IT IS PROBLEMATICAL WHETHER OR NOT THESE SUMMER SOLDIERS WILL MAINTAIN THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ARDO THROUGH A PERIOD OF PROLONGED CONSOLIDATION. THESE INTERNAL REFORMS WILL BE ESPECIALLY NECESSARY IF THE PCP IS TO MOUNT THE KIND OF EFFORT IT WILL NEED TO MAKE A RESPECTABLE SHOWING IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE BY APRIL 25. PRE-NOV 25 SOCIALIST AND OTHER POLLS
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SHOWED THAT POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE PCP HAD DROPPED FROM 12.5 PERCENT OF VOTE LAST APRIL TO BETWEEN FOUR AND SEVEN PERCENT. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR DENYING THE VALIDITY OF THE FUTURE VOTE BY INSISTING THAT "LOCAL REACTIONARY CONTROL" OF SUCH AREAS AS THE NORTH AND THE AZORES WOULD MAKE ELECTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE A "MASQUERADE."

7. THE MDP: THE PORTUGUESE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT BEFORE APRIL 25, 1974 AN OPPOSITIONIST ELECTORAL FRONT HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY THE PCP, WAS EFFECTIVELY USED BY THE COMMUNISTS AFTER THE COUP AS A TROJAN HORSE FOR GAINING CONTROL OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES. EVEN BEFORE NOV 25, THE MDP WAS SHOWING SIGNS OF ADVANCED MORIBUNDITY. THE APRIL 1974 ELECTIONS, IN WHICH THE MDP RECEIVED ONLY FOUR PERCENT OF THE VOTE, DEMONSTRATED ITS LACK OF A POPULAR BASE AND UNDERMINED ITS CLAIM TO STRONG REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. AS TIME PASSED AND MDP POSITIONS INVARIABLY APED THOSE OF THE PCP, IT BECAME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN THE CHARADE OF MDP INDEPENDENCE FROM THE COMMUNISTS. DURING THE SUMMER OF 1975, MDP OFFICES AND SUPPORTERS WERE LUMPED TOGETHER WITH THEIR COMMUNIST ALLIES AS TARGETS FOR ATTACK AND HARASSMENT IN THE NORTH AND AZORES. PRIOR TO NOV 25, THE MDP HAD NONETHELESS CONTINUED TO SERVE THE PCP'S INTERESTS BY PROVIDING A FOOT IN THE DOOR TO THE FAR LEFT "UNITED REVOLUTIONARY FRONT." EVEN THIS ROLE DISAPPEARED IN THE WAKE OF THE COUP, HOWEVER, WHEN THE FRONT DISINTEGRATED.

(B) THE MDP RETAINS AS ITS PRIMARY POLITICAL ASSETS A MEMBERSHIP CONTAINING A HIGH PROPORTION OF INTELLECTUALS AND PROFESSIONALS WITH INFLUENTIAL CONTACTS IN HIGH PLACES, AND A VESTIGIAL INFLUENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PRIMARILY IN THE CENTER AND SOUTH. THIS ALONE WOULD NOT APPEAR A SUFFICIENT BASE TO JUSTIFY THE MDP'S CONTINUED EXISTENCE AS AN INDEPENDENT PARTY, HOWEVER, AND IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE PARTY WILL SURVIVE THIS YEAR'S ELECTIONS. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE PCP WILL FIND YET ANOTHER USE FOR ITS VERSATILE ALTER-EGO, HOWEVER, AND THAT A DIMINISHED MDP WILL REMAIN ON THE SCENE.

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